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2 Based on the Rogers DOCSIS 3.0 network technology current theoretical maximum download speeds of up to 150 Mbps vs. Bell DSL network technology current maximum theoretical download speeds of up to 50 Mbps. **3** According to a report by PCMag.com published on September 18, 2013. Refer to pcmag.com/article2/0,2817,2424462.00.asp for more info.

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SPECIAL SATURDAY EDITION

Multicultural club chief enters bid for city hall

Londoner Italian by birth running for Ward 6 PAGE 3

Don't ever take sides against these movies again. Ever.

Reel Guys review film classics like The Godfather PAGE 7

... You know you're going to eat the whole thing

At least it's single-serving cheesecake PAGE 8

THREE TO WATCH

- **8 a.m.** Canada's women's hockey team begins its Olympic title defence against Switzerland.
- **9:30 a.m.** Tessa Virtue and Scott Moir compete in the new figure skating team event. Canada sits in 2nd after competition got underway Thursday.
- **1 p.m.** Four Canadians will be in the women's moguls finals, led by the Dufour-Lapointe sisters, Chloe, Justine and Maxime.

ENTERING THE RED ZONE

Hockey player Hayley Wickenheiser carries the flag Friday as she leads Team Canada into the opening ceremony of the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics. More Olympics coverage on pages 10-12. GETTY IMAGES

Golden honour for London's '48 Olympian

Success in Switzerland. Andy Gilpin was part of Canada's victorious hockey team

MIKE DONACHIE
mike.donachie@metronews.ca

Gripping his gold medal tightly, London's own Olympic treasure smiled modestly as he received a rare honour.

Friday was Andy Gilpin Day, his friends and fellow veterans declared as they shook hands and snapped pictures with the city's link to Olympic glory.

As the rest of the world focused on the opening ceremony in Sochi, a group of Londoners crammed into a building near the airport for lunch and to hear the stories about Gilpin, a 1948 Olympian.

He's 93 now, but his energy is still there.

"I played hockey until I was 70," he said. "I quit hockey because I got hurt, but it didn't stop me skating."

Back in 1948, Gilpin went all the way to St. Moritz, Switzerland, for the Olympics with the Canadian hockey team, which went on to win gold. As a reserve, he didn't get to play in the event but was still part of the team and awarded a medal.

Originally from Montreal, Gilpin's been a hockey fan all his life, playing since he was five years old.

After playing Junior A hockey in Montreal and serving in the Royal Canadian Air Force during the Second World War, he was a member of the Ottawa RCAF Flyers when they were called on to represent Canada at the first post-war Winter Olympics.

"It was great," Gilpin said. "We had an opportunity to see all the Olympics, the whole Olympics. I loved it."

And he's full of stories about the event and the dozens of exhibition games that took the team around Europe before and after the Olympics.

There was a hockey match in a snowstorm that made it tough to see the puck. The players kept stopping to have the ice cleared.

Another time, a foul left a crowd in Czechoslovakia so angry that they threw snowballs at the Canadians. Gilpin has a thousand great tales.

The 427 (London) Wing of the Royal Canadian Air Force Association planned Friday's special day for Gilpin, one of the group's most valued members, specifically to coincide to with the Sochi Games.

"He's still independent," friend and association member David White said about Gilpin, a former avionics technician. "He skates on a regular basis at the age of 93. He plays golf still."

Gilpin, for the record, advises moderation and regular exercise if you want to live to be 93.

Olympian opinion

What does Andy Gilpin think about Canada's chances at grabbing medals this time around?

- Well, he expects a better medal total than what Canadian athletes brought home in 1948. Back then, the total was three: gold in hockey, plus a gold and bronze in figure skating. "I think they'll do very well," he said.

MORE ROOMS TO SURF IN.

"It was amazing. I was streaming the game in the basement. My wife was on her tablet in the kitchen. And the kids were playing online upstairs in their room."

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4 Based on September 2013 study from Allion Engineering Services USA comparing in-home Wi-Fi modems offered by major ISPs within Rogers cable footprint. Speed may vary with internet traffic, server gateway/router, computer (quality, location in the home, software and applications installed), home wiring, home network or other factors. **5** Certified by SamKnows Limited as of August 2013. Available on the following packages (download x upload): Lite (6 Mbps x 0.256 Mbps), Express (25 Mbps x 2 Mbps), Extreme (35 Mbps x 3 Mbps), Extreme (Atlantic only) (30 Mbps x 10 Mbps), Extreme Plus (45 Mbps x 4 Mbps) and Ultimate (150 Mbps x 10 Mbps).

Rate at 7.9 per cent

Local unemployment stats promising compared to 2013

There was another rise in the unemployment rate for London-St. Thomas in January, according to Stats Canada data released Friday.

In December, it sat at 7.8 per cent. It's now climbed to 7.9 per cent, remaining one of the highest in Ontario. London's unemployment peaked at 9.9 per cent last April. The rate was sitting at 8.6 per cent in January 2013. The new data also shows the Ontario rate was down 0.4 per cent to 7.5 per cent. METRO

Prostitution issue

LAWC joins postcard campaign

A national postcard campaign against legalized prostitution has started with involvement from the London Abused Women's Centre (LAWC). It aims to highlight the Nordic model, which is based on Sweden's laws. Put simply, it makes criminals of people who are buying sex and not people who are selling it.

The campaign by an alliance of groups including LAWC is asking the federal government to consider the approach. It follows the controversial Supreme Court decision in December that struck down anti-prostitution laws and effectively legalized the trade.

A private donor has made it possible for 50,000 postcards to be printed for distribution across Canada.

They're being sent to Conservative MP Joy Smith who will then deliver them to Justice Minister Peter MacKay. Canadians can request postcards by emailing nordicmodel@lawc.on.ca. METRO

Flavio Iannialice is running as a candidate in city council Ward 6. MIKE DONACHIE/METRO

Multicultural advocate running for council

Flavio Iannialice. Club president responds to call for diverse candidates by seeking to replace Coun. Branscombe in Ward 6

MIKE DONACHIE
mike.donachie@metronews.ca

London's council doesn't represent the diversity of its citizens, one candidate in the fall election says.

And Flavio Iannialice, a Londoner who's Italian by birth, wants to change that.

Iannialice is running in Ward 6, the seat left empty by Coun. Nancy Branscombe's decision not to seek re-election.

Although he's a political newbie, Iannialice, 38, does have community work to call upon.

He's the president of the London Multicultural Club.

"Our main vision is giving a voice to those minorities, not just visible minorities but all the cultures, to help newcomers integrate themselves into the Canadian system," he said.

Part of that is visible minorities, he said, and part of it is simply giving a voice to people of different backgrounds.

"If you look at the current city council, there are 15 members and only one (Coun. Harold Usher) comes from a (visible) minority background," Iannialice said.

"I think we need more diversity, more multicultural and ethnic diversity to reflect our people."

Usher himself has called for more diversity on council, pointing out that 16 per cent of Londoners are from visible minorities.

Aside from that issue, what else does Iannialice have to say?

He's calling for the city to connect better with its citizens, consulting them more closely.

Asked about tax rises, he said there should be "more efficient, transparent spending" rather than a focus on one figure.

And, he wants more attention paid to environmental issues.

New faces in four wards

- William Gordon, Steve Hogg and Randy Warden are looking to replace Coun. Joni Baechler in Ward 5.
- Flavio Iannialice and Greg Munro are looking to replace Coun. Nancy Branscombe in Ward 6.
- Josh Morgan, the only candidate so far, is looking to take over for Coun. Matt Brown in Ward 7.
- In Ward 13, to replace Coun. Judy Bryant, the candidates are: Kim Bardai, Chris Edgar, John Fyfe-Millar, Fiona Graham and Tanya Park.

Rock the Park adds country night

Folks behind London's Rock the Park are adding a bit of twang. Organizers have added an extra night to this year's event — dedicated solely to country music.

Two-time Grammy winner Darius Rucker will headline the July 23 show — dubbed the Gone Country Music Festival — in Harris Park. Other country performers include Tim Hicks, Dean Brody and the Eli Young Band.

Three days of the festival — July 24-26 — will still be dedicated to rock fans. The lineup has not been announced. Jones Entertainment Group launched Rock the Park in 2004 to raise money for Bethany's Hope Foundation, launched by the parents of a London girl who died of metachromatic leukodystrophy (MLD).

Since then, the festival has raised $1.8 million toward MLD research.

Tickets for country night go on sale at 10 a.m. Feb. 14. Check rockthepark.ca for details. METRO

Gone Country ticket prices:

- General admission: $49 (plus taxes and surcharges)
- VIP: $89 (plus taxes and surcharges)

Crashed Ice qualifier at Bud Gardens. 50 walk-up spots up for grabs

Ever wanted to hurtle down a modified luge track at breakneck speeds?

Well, now's your chance.

The Red Bull Crashed Ice London qualifier will be at Budweiser Gardens on Tuesday.

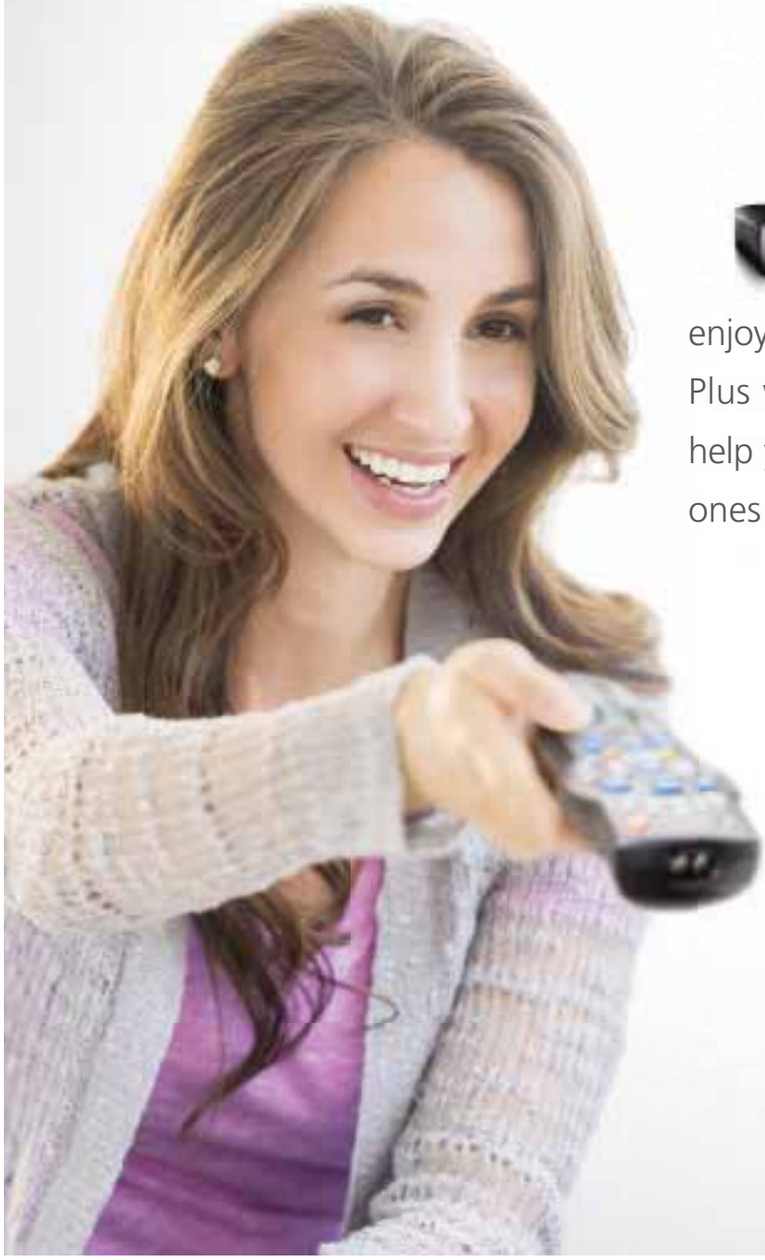
More than 200 local men and 20 women will compete in the qualifier in hopes of advancing to the World Championship season finale race in Quebec City on March 22.

There will also be 50 walk-up spots up for grabs to be filled via a lottery system.

A spokeswoman said those hoping for a walk-up spot should be at the arena at 5 p.m. for registration. METRO

MORE TO LOVE.

“I’m really glad we switched. We’ve never had so much stuff to watch. Ever.”



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6 As of January 31, 2014. Programming content differs depending on level of Rogers subscription. Charges apply to some On Demand programming content.

William Jon Orders
THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

Hang-glider pilot pleads guilty in woman's death

A former British Columbia hang-glider pilot whose passenger fell 300 metres to her death during a flight that was an anniversary gift pleaded guilty Friday to criminal negligence causing death.

William Jon Orders was charged in the death of 27-year-old Lenami Godinez-Avila, who plunged from Orders' hang-glider shortly after takeoff during a flight above B.C.'s Fraser Valley in April 2012.

Orders was also charged with obstruction of justice over allegations he swallowed a memory card that may have contained video of the incident.

Crown and defence lawyers submitted a joint proposal for a sentence of five months, followed by a probation order of three years.

The Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association of Canada investigated the accident and concluded Godinez-Avila's harness was not attached to the glider during takeoff. The investigation also concluded Orders didn't perform a pre-launch safety check.

Orders apologized the following month for his "panicked" actions, admitting to swallowing the card and explaining in a prepared statement that he had co-operated to ensure police recovered it.

Godinez-Avila was a Mexican studying in B.C. The hang-gliding experience was planned as a celebration of her and her boyfriend's two-year anniversary. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Rob Ford orders staff to remove gay-pride flag

'Let Russia do what they want.' Toronto mayor's remarks about rainbow flag at city hall blasted as 'thinly veiled homophobia'

The rainbow flag flies at Toronto city hall Friday. Mayor Rob Ford ordered the flag be taken down, saying the Olympics are not about "someone's sexual preference." DANIEL DALE/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Toronto's controversial mayor has ordered city staff to take down a rainbow flag that was raised outside city hall Friday in support of gay rights as the Olympic Games begin in Sochi, saying he wants to see the Canadian flag raised instead.

"This is about the Olympics. This is about being patriotic to your country. This is not about someone's sexual preference," he said.

When told the gesture was meant to protest anti-gay laws in Russia, Ford replied: "Let Russia do what they want. We're Canadians here."

At least one city councillor agreed with the mayor.

"If the city of Toronto was to fly a flag, I believe it should be the Canadian flag or I think it should be the Olympic flag," Coun. Denzil Minnan-Wong said. "This should be about sport and about Canadians."

Toronto is one of several Canadian cities to fly the rainbow flag, a long-standing symbol of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights and pride.

Ford has previously come under fire for his staunch refusal to attend Toronto's gay pride parade. When asked Thursday if he was planning to attend this year's parade, he said, "I've never been to a pride parade. So I'm not going to change the way I am."

The mayor's remarks prompted criticism from the public and at least one fellow city councillor, who accused him of "thinly veiled homophobia."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"This is about the Olympics. This is about being patriotic to your country. This is not about someone's sexual preference." Toronto Mayor Rob Ford

Turkey

Journalist forced to leave country over anti-gov't tweets

A Turkish newspaper says authorities decided to expel one of its journalists — an Azerbaijani national — after he posted anti-government tweets.

The Zaman newspaper said Mahir Zeynalov left Turkey for Azerbaijan on Friday before the government took steps to enforce a deportation order. He was nevertheless escorted by police at the airport. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Digital diplomacy

Diplomats should tweet for freedom, Baird says

Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird is encouraging Canadian diplomats to experiment with social media to promote democratic freedom and trade across the globe.

The plan could represent a loosening of the communications leash the Harper government has placed on foreign diplomats as part of its centralized communications strategy.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

In pictures

1 Afghanistan. NATO dog captured
Taliban fighters show a military dog they say they captured in Afghanistan. The NATO coalition confirmed one of its dogs went missing in December. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

2 Italy. Army doc me-owt of trouble
Italian Army Lt. Barbara Balanzoni holds up a picture at the Rome military court on Friday where the doctor was acquitted of disobedience for helping a cat who had trouble delivering kittens on a base in Kosovo. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

3 Budget. Flaherty's fancy footwear
Jim Flaherty puts on new shoes at Mello Shoes in Toronto on Friday. Getting new shoes is a tradition for finance ministers preparing to deliver the budget, which Flaherty will do Tuesday. AARON VINCENT ELKAIM/THE CANADIAN PRESS

4 Bosnia. Protests erupt in violence
A Bosnian protester sets a government building on fire during protests in the town of Tuzla on Friday. Protesters stormed and burned buildings in fury over unemployment and rampant corruption. AMEL EMRIC/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

5 Germany. It's a matter of pride
An activist is arrested protesting Russia's anti-gay laws ahead of the opening of the Olympics outside the Russian Embassy in Berlin Friday. AXEL SCHMIDT/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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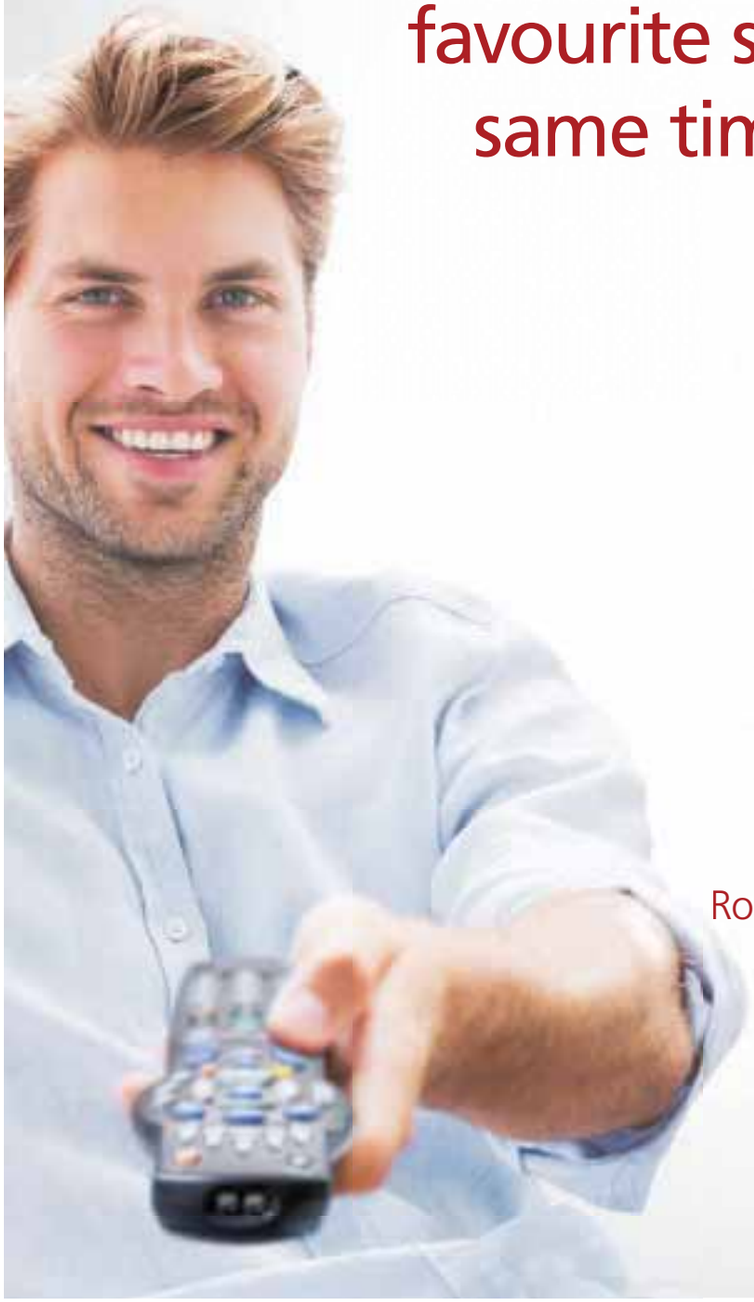

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Uma Thurman and John Travolta in much-loved Pulp Fiction. CONTRIBUTED

Too cold for the cinema? Here's a reel offer you can't refuse

Reel Guys

RICHARD CROUSE AND MARK BRESLIN

Timeless classics. Enjoy our list of reliable screen gems that will keep you glued to your couch, no matter how many times you watch 'em

Richard: Mark, there are a few movies that stop me in my tracks every time. I'm not sure how many times I have come across The Godfather on television and thought to myself, "I'll just watch this for five minutes." By the time it gets to the "Leave the gun … take the cannoli," scene I'm hooked and any plans I may have had for the day are out the window. Another movie that makes time stand still for me is The Party. You cannot call yourself a film fan and not have laughed hysterically at Peter Sellers slinging a Cornish game hen from a dinner plate to the tiara of a well-dressed dinner guest. What movies keep you inside?

Mark: The Godfather is indeed a game changer for any plans you might have made for the day. But why stop there? Why not watch the whole trilogy in one shot? Eight hours of shootings, garrottings, betrayals, screaming, and plotting will get you ready for when the spouse and kids get home. I like theme-based programming. I'm looking forward to a triple bill of Schindler's List, They Shoot Horses, Don't They?, and Leaving Las Vegas, with a razor blade resting on a silver tray, just in case.

Anywhere, anytime movies

The Reel Guys know that there's lots to do outside. We've heard talk of skating, tobogganing and snowshoeing. But who are we kidding? The closest we come to outdoor activity is a night at the drive-in, and we'd say it's a bit chilly to sit in the car and watch movies. These cold temperatures along with our aversion to frostbite means we spend a lot of time at home watching movies, or in theatres seeing the latest flicks. Here is a list of films we'd watch anytime, especially when the mercury hits –273 °C.

It's hard to refuse The Godfather. Just when you think you're only going to watch it for a few minutes, an hour or two later you been sucked in and haven't moved an inch. CONTRIBUTED

RC: I don't mind a theme night but mine doesn't usually involve razor blades. When I want to get bloody, I watch Quentin Tarantino films. I can watch Pulp Fiction any old time, but for variety sake, I usually theme his flicks in terms of their revenge, murder and drug content. It goes something like this: Pulp Fiction with Reservoir Dogs, then The Kill Bills, Jackie Brown and Inglourious Basterds and, to close off the week, Django Unchained with a palate cleanser of Death Proof.

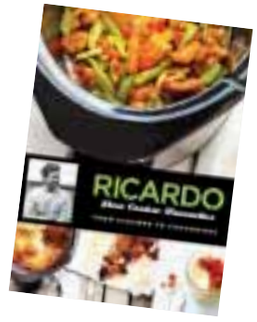
MB: I know he only wrote it but I would include True Romance in your queue. But since we're talking about directors that keep me in the house, I say I could recuperate from kidney surgery watching a Woody Allen marathon. It would be a glorious week of laughter and drinking my food through a straw. If you have less time, pick any two of his films per decade from a stack of DVDs and you won't go wrong.

RC: On these cold blustery days when I really want to hunker down and avoid the outside, Sunset Boulevard is a go-to. The movie, not the street. No mater how many times I see it, I still get caught up in the "creeping paralysis" of greed and obsession of Billy Wilder's vision. "It's the pictures that got small." Not this one though.

MB: A good Quirk-A-Thon can also keep me indoors. Here's how it works: Choose a movie like Napoleon Dynamite, then, whenever one of the characters does something eccentric, quirky or mumbly, have a drink. I promise, you'll be warm in no time.

Chef Ricardo dusts off the humble slow cooker to take its star turn as an easy, economical and energy-saving way to make everything from a comfort food classic to mouth-watering moist fish and sweet singleton desserts

Take the slow bake to creamy single-serving cheesecakes



PREP TIME 30 MIN. COOK TIME 90 MIN. CHILL TIME 4 HRS.

Cheesecake with diced strawberries and graham-cracker crumble. HARPERCOLLINS

Cheesecake is something we don't make often because with a yield of 12 pieces, we seem to be eating it for two weeks! Not only does the slow cooker guarantee a perfect texture to the cake (because the process prevents the cake from cracking), but also we use ramekins, which yield four portions. When ready to serve, we add a graham-cracker crumble and diced strawberries to make it taste like traditional cheesecake.

Directions

1. **CHEESECAKE:** Place a clean cloth in the bottom of the slow cooker to prevent the ramekins from shifting.
2. In a food processor, purée all the ingredients until smooth. Pour into four 125 ml (1/2-cup) ramekins. Place the ramekins in the cooker and carefully pour in enough hot water to come halfway up the sides of the ramekins.
3. Cover and cook on low from 1 hour and 15 minutes to 1 hour and 30 minutes or until firm and slightly puffed up. Remove the ramekins from the slow cooker and let cool. Cover with plastic wrap. Refrigerate for at least 4 hours or until completely chilled.
4. **CRUMBLE:** With the rack in the middle position, preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
5. In a bowl, combine the dry ingredients. Add the butter and mix until crumbly. With your fingers, drop the crumble in small pieces on the baking sheet. Bake, stirring twice during cooking, for about 15 minutes or until golden brown. Let cool.
6. **STRAWBERRIES:** Toss the strawberries with the sugar. Set aside for 5 minutes to macerate.
7. When ready to serve, garnish each ramekin with graham cracker crumble and strawberries.

Ingredients

Cheesecake
- 1 package (250 g/8 oz) cream cheese, softened
- 75 mL (1/3 cup) sugar
- 1 egg
- 60 mL (1/4 cup) 35% cream
- 5 mL (1 tsp) vanilla extract

Crumble
- 125 mL (1/2 cup) graham cracker crumbs
- 60 mL (1/4 cup) all-purpose flour
- 30 mL (2 tbsp) brown sugar
- 60 mL (1/4 cup) unsalted butter, softened

Strawberries
- 250 mL (1 cup) fresh strawberries, diced
- 15 mL (1 tbsp) sugar

RECIPES FROM RICARDO: SLOW COOKER FAVOURITES. PUBLISHED BY HARPERCOLLINS LTD, BY ARRANGEMENT WITH LES ÉDITIONS LA PRESSE LTÉE, MONTREAL, CANADA.

Lounge-around lasagna

Use your noodles: Uncooked pasta makes lasagna even easier. HARPERCOLLINS

This lasagna, cooked entirely in the slow cooker, has become a classic at our house. And don't be afraid to use uncooked pasta; it really works, you'll see. Beware: Do not use precooked lasagna noodles for this recipe.

1. In a bowl, combine the meat, carrot, celery, mushrooms, and garlic. Season with salt and pepper. Set aside.
2. In the bottom of the slow cooker, spread 125 mL (1/2 cup) of tomato sauce. Cover with a layer of lasagna noodles. Break them if needed so they fit.
3. Spread one-third of the meat mixture over the noodles. Cover with 250 ml (1 cup) of tomato sauce and sprinkle with 75 ml (1/3 cup) of Parmesan. Cover with another layer of lasagna noodles. Cover with the ricotta cheese.
4. Continue with a layer of lasagna noodles. Add another third of the meat mixture.
5. Cover with another layer of noodles, the remaining meat mixture, 250 ml (1 cup) of tomato sauce, and the remaining 150 ml (2/3 cup) of Parmesan. Top with the remaining tomato sauce and sprinkle with the mozzarella cheese.
6. Cover and cook on low for 4 hours. Cooking time may vary depending on the type of slow cooker you have. If the pasta is tender when a knife is inserted, the lasagna is ready. Try not to leave the lasagna on warm after it is cooked because the pasta will get soggy.

Ingredients
- 454 g (1 lb) Italian sausage meat, mild or spicy (about 4 sausages)
- 1 large carrot, peeled and finely grated
- 1 stalk celery, finely chopped
- 115 g (4 oz) white button mushrooms, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 L (4 cups) homemade or store-bought tomato sauce
- 12 uncooked lasagna noodles (approx.)
- 250 mL (1 cup) grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese
- 1 container (475 g) ricotta cheese
- 375 mL (1-1/2 cups) grated mozzarella cheese
- Salt and pepper

Prep: 30 minutes
Cook: 4 hours
Serves: 6

A fine kettle of fish. Succulent slow-cooked salmon with fennel

Salmon on a bed of rice. HARPERCOLLINS

I can hear you asking, "Why cook salmon in a slow cooker when it is so easy to grill?" I was skeptical as well. But because the slow cooker cooks with an even, moist heat, the texture of the salmon cooked this way is absolutely divine. I have rarely tasted such moist salmon. One of the most pleasant surprises in our test kitchen.

1. In the slow cooker, combine the broth and the liqueur, if using. Place the salmon fillets in the cooker and scatter the sliced fennel over them. Season with salt and pepper.
2. Cover and cook on low for about 1 hour and 15 minutes or until the salmon is just pink in the middle. Serve the salmon with the fennel and steamed rice. Garnish with the fennel fronds.

Ingredients
- 250 mL (1 cup) vegetable broth
- 10 mL (2 tsp) anise liqueur (such as pastis or ouzo) (optional)
- 4 thick skinless salmon fillets
- 1/2 bulb fennel, stalks removed, thinly sliced, ideally on a mandoline
- 30 mL (2 tbsp) finely chopped fennel fronds
- Salt and pepper

Prep: 10 minutes
Cook: 1 hour 15 minutes
Serves: 4

Not so fast! You could fall for a slow cooker

Feeding a big family or eating for one. There is a model out there for everyone and they now do more than ever

DINNER EXPRESS
Emily Richards
food@metronews.ca

Find the right size for you and enjoy the versatility of a slow cooker. ISTOCK

Walk through the small appliances aisle of a store and you may be amazed to see how many varieties of slow cookers there are. Here is a slow cooker primer for you to glance over if you are planning on purchasing one or need to update the one you already have

What size do I get?
Slow cookers range in size from very small (warmers) to extended family size. Ask yourself some questions before you buy: How big is my family? Do I want leftovers for lunch? Warmers or dippers are really just that: very small-sized slow cookers that have very few functions, which are to keep dips and sauces warm or to enjoy a fondue.

Types
• Two-quart (2 litres) slow cookers are great for small households of two people, take up very little space and they usually are round in shape.

• Four to 6 quart (4 to 6 litres) is the average for most slow cookers, leaving plenty of space to cook a variety of recipes for families of 4 to 6 people. These can be round or oval in shape.

• Larger slow cookers, 7 quart (7 litres) or more, are perfect for larger families or if you are serving food at a large gathering. These are typically large oval or rectangular in shape.

What shape is right for me?
If your family loves roasts and larger pieces of meat and poultry, you will want to look at an oval- or rectangular-shaped slow cooker. With the larger surface area you will be able to comfortably fit larger cuts and accommodate those types of recipes.

If soups and chunky stews are more up your alley, then a round slow cooker is what you'll want to buy.

How much do they cost?
Depending on the size, shape and function, the prices range from a mere $20 to more than $200. Most slow cookers have a stainless steel outer casing, but some are coloured or white, which will also affect the pricing.

What more can a slow cooker do?
Most slow cookers on the market have a basic function of low or high to cook with and a warm or hold feature so that if you are not ready to serve your meal you can keep it warm. With the digital features of some slow cookers, you can set the time to come on when you want and then it will automatically switch over to the warming feature once the achieved cooking is done.

Other things to consider
Convenience of having a removable stoneware is important for clean up (dishwasher safe) and serving. It's also great if you want to bring your meal to the table to enjoy without having the entire slow cooker attached to it. Having a tempered glass lid is helpful so you can peak in and see how things are progressing to eliminate steam escaping while cooking. If you will be travelling with it, look for a slow cooker that has travel clips to keep the lid secure while in transport.

What's new in slow cookers?
Here is where you might find the best reasons to purchase your slow cooker. The versatility of slow cookers, also now referred to as multi-cookers, can truly make or break your purchase. Some current features are the sauté or sear feature, which eliminates the need to brown meat or poultry in a skillet before adding it to the slow cooker.

Speeding up the cooking process is another feature now available that lets you get that slow-cooked taste in a fraction of the time. Steaming some foods in your slow cooker to is yet another newer function on the newest models. With a steaming basket or tray you can have perfect tender dishes to serve to your family. Cooking rice or risotto can be another option in your slow cooker and also keep it warm while the rest of your dinner is complete.

Editor's picks

Breville Fast Slow Cooker,
Various retailers, $200
Visit breville.ca

Crock-Pot Cook & Carry
Walmart, $69.99
Visit Crock-pot.ca

Breville Easy Slow Cooker
Sears, $179.99
Visit Breville.ca

Advice

GOT THE BLAHS? METRO'S EXPERTS HAVE THE CURE

That's some good sheet

KARL LOHNES
Design expert

Nothing says cosy like a good set of flannel bed sheets and there is no easier bedroom makeover than a new sheet set and duvet for the bed. It's a true luxury that will have you wanting to call in sick and stay in bed during the bleak days of winter. From $150 (duvet) and $185 (sheet set) $75 (sham set). thebay.com

Fond of fondue?

KATHY BUCKWORTH
Parenting expert

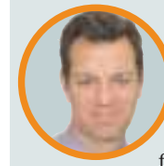
Family Fondue nights, or as I call them (to annoy the children), "Fundues" are a favourite. The kids love cooking their own food and we spend more time at the table chatting. And I don't have to cook for anyone else.

Pep up with parsley

THERESA ALBERT
Nutrition expert

February sucks. We're all craving spring with visions of veggie gardens dancing in our heads. Since that isn't going to happen for some time, simply go with the cheapest, perkiest green springy thing available: parsley. Parsley contains the volatile oil, myristicin, which helps activate the pathway to remove oxidative damage from your cells. Add a handful to salads, smoothies and pastas.

Swap snow for sun, sea and sand



LOREN CHRISTIE
Travel expert

Need a blast of sunshine without breaking the bank? Cuba, Mexico's Mayan Riviera, and Punta Cana in the Dominican are your best bets. Flexibility on departure dates, resort, room types and the ability to book quickly ensure the best deal. If you can find something for $1,500 to $2,000 per person including taxes, book it!

Warm and listen up

ELIZABETH BEDDALL
Style expert

Convincing yourself to physically face the sleet and snow is no simple task. This high-definition headphone set disguised as earmuffs will convince you to dance into the snow in total denial. Pump up the Bob Marley, pretend that skating rink of a front yard is a balmy beach and get on with your day in super-snug style. Bluetooth Headphone Earmuffs $79.99, sharperimage.com

Three-time gold medallist Irina Rodnina and Russian hockey legend Vladislav Tretiak light the Olympic cauldron during the opening ceremony of the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia, on Friday. MATT SLOCUM/POOL/GETTY IMAGES

Games open from Russia with love

Official kickoff.
Russia sets aside troubles, launches Sochi Olympics with a spirited ceremony

A crowning achievement of Vladimir Putin's Russia kicked off Friday with a celebration of its past greatness and hopes for future glory, most especially for a raucous group of Russian athletes who marched into the rollicking opening ceremony of the Sochi Olympics with a message.

To the best athletes in the world, who they've invited to the edge of the Black Sea to compete on ice and snow, amid concerns about terrorism and criticism of intolerance of gay people, they sang: You're "not gonna get us."

To begin the festivities, Russian TV star Yana Churikova shouted to a crowd still taking their seats: "Welcome to the centre of the universe!"

Shades of Vancouver: A technical glitch kept one of the Olympic rings from opening during the opening ceremony. PAUL CHIASSON/THE CANADIAN PRESS

For the next two weeks, it certainly is for the 3,000 athletes who will compete in 98 events, more people and contests than ever at the Winter Games.

The show opened with a hiccup, as the lighting of the five Olympic Rings overshadowed the singing of the Russian national anthem. Five snowflakes on cables drifted together above the stadium, and four of them turned into Olympic rings — but the fifth never unfurled and they all failed to erupt into white flames as planned.

Also missing from the show: Putin's repression of dissent, those worries of terrorism and inconsistent security measures at the Olympics, which will take place just a few hundred miles away from the sites of an insurgency and routine militant violence.

For all the criticism, there was no shortage of pride at the ceremony in what Russia has achieved with these games. The head of the Sochi organizing committee, Dmitry Chernyshenko, captured the mood of many Russians present when he said, "We're now at the heart of that dream that became reality."

"The games in Sochi are our chance to show the whole world the best of what Russia is proud of," he said. "Our hospitality, our achievements, our Russia!"

Women's hockey star Hayley Wickenheiser carried the Maple Leaf to lead representatives from Canada's 220-athlete team. It's Canada's biggest team ever assembled for a Winter Games.

"To represent the best of Canada is such an honour, it's chilling," Wickenheiser said. "There is so much excitement."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tweeted

"I wish our Olympians the best of luck as they take on the world in Sochi."

Prime Minister Stephen Harper
posted on his Twitter account.

Bomb threat

Hijacking attempt to Sochi foiled

A Ukrainian passenger on an Istanbul-bound flight claimed Friday there was a bomb on board and tried to hijack the plane to Sochi, Russia, where the Winter Olympics were kicking off, an official said.

According to NTV television, an F-16 fighter plane was scrambled as soon as the pilot signalled there was a hijacking attempt and escorted the plane to Istanbul's Sabiha Gokcen airport.

Turkey's state-run TRT television said authorities convinced the man to give himself up and he was taken into police custody.

There were 110 passengers on board the flight from Kharkiv, Ukraine.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Scotties

Homan sweeps round-robin

The first part of the Scotties Tournament of Hearts went perfectly for defending champion Rachel Homan.

The Canada skip from Ottawa led her squad to a perfect 11-0 round-robin record with a 7-3 victory over New Brunswick's Andrea Crawford (6-5) at the Maurice Richard Arena on Friday.

Homan will face Chelsea Carey's Manitoba rink (9-2) in the first-versus-second game Friday night. Carey clinched the No. 2 spot with a 6-4 victory over P.E.I's Kim Dolan (3-8).

Homan's rink is looking to become the first to go through the Scotties undefeated since Linda Moore in 1985. THE CANADIAN PRESS

World Cup

Brazil stadium construction kills third worker

A worker was killed in an accident outside the World Cup stadium in the Brazilian jungle city of Manaus, local organizers said Friday.

Organizers in charge of the city's preparations said the worker died while dismantling a crane that was used to install the roof of the Arena da Amazonia.

It is the third death of a worker in or near the stadium in Manaus.

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10 CANADIAN ATHLETES TO WATCH

From left, Atsuko Tanaka, Patrick Chan and Alex Gough

PATRICK CHAN
Figure skating

Chan is the odds-on choice among the men, trying for Canada's first gold medal in the Olympics. No, Brian Orser, Kurt Browning and Elvis Stojko didn't manage it.

That puts extreme pressure on Toronto's Chan, who was upset at the Grand Prix Final by Japan's Yuzuru Hanyu, albeit by less than a point.

Chan also will be tested by Denis Ten of Kazakhstan and Javier Fernandez of Spain.

ALEX HARVEY
Cross-country skiing

Harvey won gold, silver and bronze at the Tour de Ski and now has a total of 12 podium finishes at World Cup or world championship events. He's a good bet to win a medal.

DAVE DUNCAN
Ski cross

The London, Ont., native had raced in several finals since joining the Canadian ski cross team in 2007 but had not won a World Cup until this season. He broke through last month with a win in Innichen-San Candido, Italy, and followed it up with another gold the next day.

A broken collarbone prevented Duncan from competing at the Vancouver Games, so he's been waiting a long time for this chance.

KAILLIE HUMPHRIES
Bobsled

Humphries has been dominant on the World Cup circuit over the last two years. Humphries and Heather Moyse won Olympic gold four years ago and are favoured to repeat.

ALEX GOUGH
Luge

Canada has competed in every Olympic luge competition since the Grenoble Games in 1968 but is still looking for its first medal. That drought could come to an end in Sochi.

Gough became the first Canadian to win a World Cup luge race in 2011 and she's enjoying another strong season. A luge relay has been added to the lineup for Sochi, and Canada could reach the podium in that event as well.

THE CANADIAN PRESS/
PHOTOS BY GETTY IMAGES

MARK McMORRIS
Snowboarding

Slopestyle will make its Olympic debut in Sochi and McMorris is expected to be in the mix for gold. The Regina native will compete with a broken rib sustained at the recent X Games.

ATSUKO TANAKA
Ski jumping

It has been over two decades since Canada had a legitimate medal threat in ski jumping. You have to go all the way back to Horst Bulau, who finished seventh at the 1988 Games in Calgary.

Women's ski jumping makes its Olympic debut in Sochi and Tanaka leads Canadian hopes. She finished fourth at a recent World Cup in Japan and is a good dark-horse pick for a medal.

KAETLYN OSMOND
Figure skating

Osmond just turned 18 and is poised to lead a young crop of women's skaters in this country. The field will be stacked in Sochi, but Osmond could make a splash.

BRAD JACOBS
Curling

Olympic success would cap a remarkable 12-month run for Jacobs and his Sault Ste. Marie, Ont.,-based rink.

They broke through on the men's curling scene last March by winning the Tim Hortons Brier, giving Northern Ontario its first national title since 1985. Jacobs skipped his team to a silver medal at the world championship a month later.

He earned the Sochi berth with an impressive undefeated run at the Olympic trials.

ERIK GUAY
Alpine Skiing

The 2011 world downhill champion just missed the podium in his first two appearances at the Games. He's hoping the third time will give him that elusive Olympic medal.

Sochi censorship

Kripps says website blocked

Canadian bobsledder Justin Kripps says it appears his website was censored in Russia.

Attempts by The Canadian Press to access the website in Sochi brought up a message in Cyrillic, which says the site has been blocked because of a breach of Russian legislation.

"Looks like my website is censored in Russia, haha classic #SochiProblems I wonder if there's a camera in my room" Kripps tweeted. Kripps and his teammates became Internet stars when they posed for a photo in their underwear.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Team Finland

Koivu's ankle not healed in time

Minnesota Wild centre Mikko Koivu decided his surgically repaired right ankle has not healed enough to allow him to play for Finland in the Olympics.

Koivu, who had surgery after fracturing his right ankle while blocking a shot on Jan. 4, has been out the past 15 games for Minnesota heading into the Olympic beak.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Team Slovakia

Radivojevic in for star Gaborik

Slovan Bratislava forward Branko Radivojevic will replace injured forward Marian Gaborik of the Columbus Blue Jackets on the Slovak team for the Sochi Olympics.

Gaborik broke a collarbone in an NHL game against the Philadelphia Flyers on Dec. 21.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bruin bearer

"I can't really describe until it all sinks in."

Zdeno Chara on being the flagbearer for Slovakia at the opening ceremonies on Friday. Chara could only do this once he got permission from the Boston Bruins. He spoke with coach Claude Julien and general manager Peter Chiarelli before taking the case to owner Jeremy Jacobs, who signed off on Chara's "dream come true." He'll miss two Bruins games after leaving for Sochi early.

Adversity part of Canada's training

Women's hockey.
Coach's departure, slew of games and intense fitness regimen has given reigning gold-medal champs thick skin

Canadian women's players Meghan Agosta-Marciano, from left, Natalie Spooner, Shannon Szabados, Hayley Wickenheiser and Laura Fortino pose for a photo before practice at the Shayba Arena on Thursday in Sochi. MARIE ROSE/GETTY IMAGES

Recognizing his players were physically and mentally spent, Kevin Dineen held out a credit card. Forward Jayna Hefford grabbed it.

Dineen's only condition that January night in St. Polten, Austria, was that all 21 players on the Canadian women's hockey team were involved in whatever they charged to the coach's plastic.

"He said 'one drink,'" Hefford said. "He didn't say how big though."

And so the Canadian women began refilling their empty tanks for the 2014 Winter Games in Sochi, Russia.

Canada opens defence of its three straight gold medals in women's hockey Saturday against Switzerland.

The Canadians have played almost 50 games since they began training full time in Calgary in August.

The final three weeks of preparation were gruelling by design to harden them for Sochi. Games were sandwiched between stepped-up dryland training sessions.

And there were emotional stressors to boot.

The abrupt departure of Dan Church on Dec. 12 meant Canada was without a head coach less than two months out from the opening ceremonies. They adjusted on the fly to Dineen, who was fired by the Florida Panthers in November.

The hard training in combination with games was counterintuitive to Dineen.

"That's not the way I was used to doing my business," he admitted. "I think we were a tired bunch physically and mentally.

"That's the way the schedule was set up and from Day 1, I bought into what we were doing to prepare for the Olympics."

The jet-lagged Canadians lost 5-4 to a boys' under-18 team upon arrival in Austria. It was at that point Dineen gave the players two days off and the aforementioned credit card.

"Why did I hand over a credit card to Jayna?" Dineen said. "I think they might have been a little sensitive that the program had not had much success on the wins and losses to that point. I wasn't sweating it. I know they're prepared, I know they're ready. I know it hadn't been always fun for us, but the chance to go out in a different country and have a soda pop with one of your teammates is a pretty awesome night."

"Maybe I gave them a little nudge. You get around people in a different atmosphere and sometimes it changes the dynamics and conversations."

They won their next game in Austria 8-1 against a male under-20 team for their first victory under Dineen.

They arrived in Sochi last Sunday looking fresher and skating faster during the week.

"We didn't change anything in our plan because we were losing games," assistant coach Danielle Goyette said.

"Our goal is to win all the games at the Olympics and win the last one. We might have sacrificed some games this year, but we had to make sure we were peaking at the right time." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Outer limits of exhaustion

"I think we felt like we'd been run over by a truck."

Canadian defenceman Meaghan Mikkelson, on the team's final weekend before departing for Austria, the women lost to a midget triple-A team Jan. 17, rode the bikes hard for an hour after practice the following day and then had less than 24 hours to recover before an afternoon game Jan. 19.

Under Dineen

0-4

Canada lost four exhibition games to the U.S. women and went 1-6 in the Alberta Midget Hockey League after Dan Church's departure.

Canadian goalie Shannon Szabados practises on Thursday in Sochi. PETR DAVID JOSEK/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Podium projection

Canada's goal is to win more medals than any other country in Sochi. Here are The Canadian Press's medal predictions for Canada:

- **Alpine skiing.** Canada hasn't won an alpine medal since 1994, but downhillers Erik Guay, Manny Osborne-Paradis and Marie-Michele Gagnon should end the drought. **Medal prediction:** 2
- **Biathlon.** Jean-Philippe Le Guellec posted historic results in the last four years, but the field is so deep he'll need perfect racing and accuracy. **Medal prediction:** 0
- **Bobsleigh.** Kaillie Humphries and Heather Moyse are back to defend gold. Expect a medal. The men are capable of medals in two- and four-man. **Medal prediction:** 2
- **Cross-country skiing.** Alex Harvey is peaking at the right time. He and Devon Kershaw are podium threats in the team pursuit and the men's relay team is a contender. **Medal prediction:** 2
- **Curling.** Like hockey, it's not a question of whether Canada wins two medals in the sport, it's what colour? **Medal prediction:** 2
- **Figure skating.** Canada is a virtual lock in the new team event. Patrick Chan aims to be Canada's first Olympic men's champion. Ice dancers Tessa Virtue and Scott Moir are favourites. **Medal Prediction:** 3
- **Freestyle skiing.** The freestylers will be the driver of Canada's medal count. Defending moguls champ Alex Bilodeau and Mikael Kingsbury have dominated podiums since 2010. **Medal prediction:** 6
- **Hockey.** Canada and Russia are men's favourites. The women should meet the U.S. for gold again. **Medal prediction:** 2
- **Luge.** Luge is the Canadian sport that has come the furthest since 2010. Calgary's Alex Gough has broken up the domination of German women. **Medal prediction:** 2
- **Nordic combined/ski jumping.** Female ski jumpers compete in the Olympics for the first time. Among them are Canadians Atsuko Tanaka, Taylor Henrich. A medal is a longshot. **Medal prediction:** 0
- **Short-track speedskating.** Charles Hamelin and Marianne St.-Gelais are strong medal contenders. **Medal prediction:** 5
- **Skeleton.** Sarah Reid, a bronze medallist at last year's world championship, is Canada's best chance. **Medal prediction:** 0
- **Snowboard.** Maelle Ricker is the reigning world and Olympic women's champion and Dominique Maltais is a consistent podium performer in boarder cross. Mark McMorris's momentum in slopestyle took a hit when he fractured a rib at the X Games. **Medal prediction:** 3
- **Speedskating.** The long-track team lacks the depth it once had. Christine Nesbitt of London is the defending champion in the women's 1,000 M, but hasn't medalled this season. The men's and women's pursuit teams are medal contenders. **Medal prediction:** 1

Canada's total medal prediction: 30

Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
Looking back on the past week you will feel quietly pleased with yourself, not least for having resisted the temptation to get uptight about issues that are of no real importance. Let others rant and rage. For you, the weekend is about relaxing.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
Someone will tell you something you find hard to take seriously this weekend but don't dismiss it. If you dig a bit deeper, you may find there is truth in what they are saying.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
You have grown tired of an association that has had a lot more downs than ups and you are ready to call it a day. There may be a few regrets but you know this is one relationship you are better off without.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
What seems important to you now won't seem so important from the early part of next week. It's not so much your attitude that has changed as your values: Ideas seem more exciting than making money.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
There are a number of things in your life that you no longer need, so make a list then get rid of them all in one go. You can be surprisingly ruthless when you put your mind to it.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
You have far too many things on the go and you run the risk of losing control. This would be a good time to get friends and family to help you out.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
The problems you are having with a new work routine are minor and likely to be short-lived, so don't let them annoy you. And don't let others tell you that you need to change course. They're wrong.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
There is a chance that one of your dreams is about to come true, so keep believing that success is just around the next corner. Today's dream is tomorrow's reality.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
You should find it easy to talk to partners and colleagues this weekend: you will know just the right things to say. Help loved ones and friends to feel good about themselves.

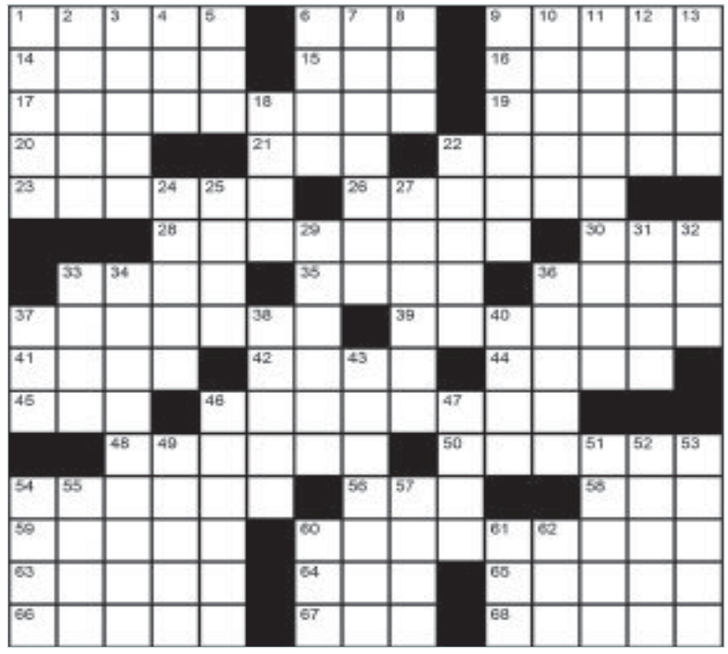
♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You may have something urgent to say but now that Mercury, planet of communication, is moving retrograde you will find it hard to find the right words. It won't hurt to wait.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
You can pretend that a money problem does not exist but you will have to come back to it soon, so you might as well deal with it now. You have spent far too much and need to save.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
You will be in an remarkably forgiving mood over the next few days and that's good because there's a lot to forgive. The thing to remember is that you are not just forgiving for other people's benefit but also for your own. SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

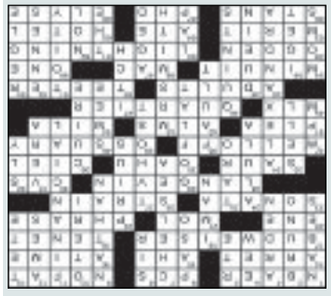
See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.
BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



Across
1. Toronto Raptor, e.g.
6. Keyboard spots, e.g.
9. What Jack Sprat could eat: 2 wds.
14. Quebec stop sign word
15. Sushi tuna
16. "One Day at _ __"
17. __ Gardens (Sporting/entertainment facility in downtown London, ON)
19. Principle
20. Compass pt.
21. Filmdom's Gretchen
22. Catchy sentence?
23. Beethoven's 'Moonlight'
26. Tense up
28. __ Block (Ottawa location of the Office of the Prime Minister)
30. Li'l resumes
33. 'Dino' suffix
35. Hawaiian island
36. Sky: French
37. Rich
39. Bones-of-the-dead receptacle
41. __ bargain
42. Donations
44. Mrs. Mulroney
45. Nero's 1060
46. Ottawa area, __ Vanier
48. Grown-ups
50. Show unsteadiness
54. Midnight: French
56. _.-._ Cosmetics
58. A number
59. Humorous poet Mr. Nash
60. London __ (Pro basketball team in London, ON, that's part of the National Basketball League of Canada)
63. Virtue
64. Downed
65. Room service place
66. Namesakes of Oliver's funny partner
67. Really high deg.
68. Meredith's "Family Ties" role

Down
1. Parts of towns, fun-style
2. Sacha Baron Cohen movie
3. Canadian singer Jann
4. "Thaat's grooss!"
5. Pathway [abbr.]
6. Dance style, __ Doble
7. Joni Mitchell's "__ Morning"
8. "Yes, __!" (Soldier-to-Sergeant response)
9. __ Phillips Square, in Toronto
10. Comedy's Cheri
11. Business centre of downtown Toronto, __ District
12. "Mister Ed" actor Leon
13. Guillotine target?
18. David Bowie's wife
22. Toyota hybrid car
24. Gene Vincent's "Be-Bop-_-__"
25. Tropical tuber
27. Marilyn Denis, for one: 2 wds.
29. Become a fizzy-less Coke: 2 wds.
31. Designer Ms. Wang
32. Crafty
33. Hawk
34. Historic drama venue in Toronto since 1907, Royal __ Theatre
36. Cook (as a meal) in French
37. Typing stat.
38. San Andreas __
40. Peter Pan character
43. Brad Pitt role opposite Angelina Jolie: 2 wds.
46. Canada's famous Dionnes, e.g.
47. Longing
49. Expected to arrive: 2 wds.
51. Hoity's pal
52. Feminizing suffixes
53. Ruler: French
54. Some parents
55. Beatles tune: "When _ __ Home"
57. Ripened
60. Track circuit
61. __ Guess Who
62. Baseball's Mr. Ryan, for short

Crossword answer



Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

	5		4		1		9	
	2	1	3		7	8	4	
4			7		5			1
		6	1		9	4		
2			8		3			9
	6	3	5		2	7	8	
	7		6		4		1	

Sudoku answer

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